

A. Morse, his counsel, when he left the cell and remarked: "I'm ready." He was smiling when he reached the electric chair.

An Hicheson came into the death chamber. Chaplain Stebbins read aloud from the Fifty-first Psalm:

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from all unrighteousness. For I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me."

Then the chaplain read from H. Timothy, first chapter, twelfth verse:

"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

"Would you like to confess Christ before these witnesses as you Saviour?" asked the Rev. Mr. Johnson.

"I do confess Christ as my Saviour," came the answer firmly.

"Have you the peace of God in your heart in this hour?"

"I have the peace of God in my heart."

"Now Christ give you the strength you need in this hour?"

"Christ gives me the strength I need."

"Have you the strength to meet death?"

"I have. God will take care of my soul and I pray for all."

"Do you here repent of your sin?"

"I do repent of every sin."

"Do you forgive everybody?"

"I forgive everybody."

"Are you willing to die for Jesus?"

"I am willing to die."

Just as the word "die" left Hicheson's lips, Warden Bridges raised his cane slightly and at that moment there was a snap as the electric switch shot into place and sent a death-dealing stroke of electricity coursing through Hicheson's body and the man was dead.

The body of Hicheson slumped forward in the chair, the straps that held it were strained to the breaking point and a faint hissing noise was heard as the electrodes became white-hot in their contact with the body, but all sound came from the throat of the law's victim.

For one minute and eight seconds the current was kept on at full strength of 1,500 volts, eight amperes. Then the switch was thrown off, the wires disconnected and the three physicians, Maerath, McLaughlin and Bridges, each in turn applied his stethoscope to the body of Hicheson. His coat and vest were thrown open, the stethoscopes were placed on his chest and the collar removed and the chest bared.

The physicians again applied their instruments and listened and as each one stepped back from the chair, his words were: "There is no respiration."

At 12:17 the physicians and the legal witnesses formally pronounced the man dead. The body was then removed from the death chair and placed upon a table behind a screen.

BOSTON, May 20. — Clarence V. T. Hicheson passed to-day the same way that he spent the two previous days.

He slept very little, scarcely tasted food, read the Bible and other religious books, talked and prayed with the Rev. Mr. S. Johnson and the Rev. Mr. Stebbins, and expressed his final wishes to William A. Morse, of his counsel.

Because he had abstained from food so long, Hicheson was much weakened to-night but he retained, so word came from the death house at 9 o'clock, complete control of his faculties and there were no indications at that hour of his breaking down at the last moment.

Dr. Johnson remained with the condemned man until this morning, at which hour his watch was relieved by Chaplain Stebbins.

During the night, the condemned man talked with his visitor and discussed religious topics as he had done on Sunday. He reclined upon his cot without closing his eyes until this morning, when he dropped off to sleep and did not awaken until 9.

Then some breakfast was sent to the cell, but Hicheson did not touch the food.

He greeted Gen. Bridges cheerfully, and again declared that he would make no trouble while the time came for him to go to the chair.

An hour later Deputy Warden Allen, Dr. J. J. McLaughlin, the prison physician, and the Rev. Mr. Stebbins, the prison priest, went to the cell. Dr. McLaughlin examined Hicheson closely, but did not detect anything unusual in his condition or state of mind.

The physician left about ten minutes later, accompanied by Dr. Johnson, who had come to the cell at 9 A. M. To the reporters Dr. Johnson said that the condemned man was weak from lack of nourishment but was in good shape and in no danger of collapsing.

Dr. Johnson remained with the cell at 11 o'clock said to the newspaper men:

"Mr. Hicheson is in good condition. He is ready to die and he is ready to meet the punishment for his crime."

"He had a brief sleep this morning, and I gave him strength to go through the rest of the day. He dropped off to sleep and awoke without knowing that he had closed his eyes."

"He does not yet know just when he is to die, but I know I am practically certain. I have not heard from Hicheson's brother, Hicheson himself has expressed a desire to see his brother, but he fears that the meeting would prove to be a nightmare, as his brother would never be able to leave the scene from his memory."

When the clock struck midnight, the cell again, Hicheson arose and partly dressed himself. After some conversation Dr. Johnson informed the prisoner that today was his last night in prison and that he would have to pay the penalty for his crime soon after midnight.

Hicheson received this fatal information with composure. He said he was less disturbed than was his spiritual adviser.

A substantial dinner was taken to Hicheson during the noon hour but he did not eat anything, except some fruit, though urged to do so by Dr. Johnson, who partook heartily, thinking that his example might inspire Hicheson.

While Hicheson was being informed that he and would come tonight, Warden Bridges was being visited by the man who will pull the lever that sends the electricity through the prisoner's body. He is Edwin R. Carrier, chief engineer in the Massachusetts General Hospital. It had been thought that Davis, regular man for the work, who was to have come from New York for the purpose, would not be able to do so.

Carrier said that he had received a despatch from Davis asking him to perform the task.

Carrier was taken to the death house and spent two hours examining the electric chair and testing the electric apparatus. The examination was within forty feet of Hicheson at the time, the chair being in a room leading off the corridor where the death cells are, but so noiselessly that Carrier performed his work that no sound was heard by either the condemned man, his guards or by Dr. Johnson.

When Carrier came out of the warden's office, he said that there was no chance of the death-dealing apparatus failing to work.

Attorney Morse arrived at the prison about 12 o'clock. Before entering in his client he told the reporters that when he reached his office this morning an aged clergyman with patriarchal beard was waiting to interrogate him as regards the Hicheson case. It was evidently the intention of the stranger, as gathered from his talk, to take legal steps to fight the case further and stave off the execution by application to the courts for a writ of error and a request to the Governor to stay execution until such time as the case might be heard on its merits.

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reputation of the story that has been persistently circulated that Hicheson was dissatisfied with what had been done for him by his attorneys, and is a direct answer to the demands purporting to come from attorneys of Hicheson for the reopening of the case on the ground of dissatisfaction with the lawyers. Mr. Morse said:

"Hicheson is fully prepared to die and I doubt very much if a stay in the execution of the sentence would appeal to him at this time. No later than yesterday he told me that he was satisfied with the way we had done for him, the fight we had made to save his life and his gratitude for all we had done."

"The only change as has been wrought in this man in the last few days, for when he was told that the end was near he stiffened up and is now ready to meet death with Christian fortitude. He appears bigger in every way and does not refer to earthly things except when discussing personal matters."

"It was last night that he was going over the details of the funeral service which he thinks will be held at his home in Virginia, and after speaking of several psalms and hymns he asked me if I had heard them. I told him that I had heard all but one and without a moment's hesitancy or showing the least feeling he hummed the tune of the hymn which he wanted to be sung, and one that went direct to the heart, for the surroundings were in themselves sufficiently gruesome, with the death chair, the stethoscopes, the wires, the switch, the three physicians, Maerath, McLaughlin and Bridges, each in turn applying his stethoscope to the body of Hicheson. His coat and vest were thrown open, the stethoscopes were placed on his chest and the collar removed and the chest bared."

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and all seemed eager to discuss Hicheson and his name was constantly on their lips, but they soon disappeared.

Just before midnight the legal witnesses reached the prison and were introduced to each other. They were Dr. George B. Maerath, Medical Examiner of Suffolk county; Dr. Joseph L. McLaughlin, the prison physician, and Surgeon Major J. P. Butler of the Ninth Regiment, who came to the place of Surgeon-General Charles C. Foster.

They went into the warden's office and met some of the other fifteen men who had come to witness the execution. These were Deputy Sheriff Edmund C. Kelley of Suffolk county, who came in the place of Sheriff Quinn; Warden Bridges and three newspaper men, the Rev. Dr. Johnson, Chaplain Stebbins, Deputy Warden Allen and four prison guards complete the roster of those in the death chamber.

Electrician Carrier took his station in the room behind a screen. When the warden dropped his silver heeled cane it was the signal to throw the switch to send the condemned man into eternity.

CRIME FOR WHICH HE PAID.

Murder of Avis Linnell Was Claimed to Have Worked Out.

Seven months and six days was the period between the death of Avis Linnell and that of the man who poisoned her. It was on the afternoon of October 11, 1911, that the choir singer of Deaneville Church in Cambridge walked beside the Back Bay fens and at the end of the walk he gave her a capsule of cyanide of potassium, telling her it was medicine which taken after she had retired would end her trouble for which he was responsible. That night she was found dead in the Young Women's Christian Association rooms, her home in Boston while she studied at the New England Conservatory of Music. She had taken the "medicine" while Hicheson was visiting another one of his fiancées, Miss Violet Edmunds, in Brookline.

"Miss Linnell died," said Hicheson when at length a friend of Avis Linnell reached him by telephone at his home in Cambridge. "But why do you call me?" And then when it was explained that he was the only friend near at hand, he added calmly, "Oh, now I remember that I baptized Miss Linnell in Hyannis three years ago. I know her family at Hyannis. I used to reach there, but I do not know why I should be called in this matter. You know the names of her parents, don't you?"

In his sermon the next day Hicheson referred to the death of Avis Linnell, but almost immediately he was suspected. Medical Examiner Leary was convinced that murder had been done. Avis Linnell's friend, Miss Helen Hanscomb, told the police what she knew of Miss Linnell's Saturday afternoon walk with a man. She thought the man was Hicheson, known to be engaged to Miss Linnell, though she had guardedly referred to him only as "my friend."

In addition to the cyanide capsule, Hicheson had given to Miss Linnell a course of pills which she took as a cure for stickiness. The confessor who sold the jar was found, and he said the buyer had been Hicheson. The evidence was built up rapidly. Hicheson had bought the cyanide on October 10 from William Hain, a druggist of Newton Centre, telling Hain he wanted to kill a dog and saying "Can you keep a secret? I haven't bought this."

Two days later the clergyman borrowed a bowl from his landlady, Mrs. Frank Carter, tried to evolve pills from paste, abandoned the attempt, returned the bowl to Mrs. Carter and told her to be sure to wash it as it had contained poison. On October 12 he telephoned to Miss Linnell from the home of a neighbor, Mrs. Danksin, asking the girl to meet him that evening. She couldn't, she replied. She was to attend a party. She would meet him on Saturday, and so the engagement was made. Mrs. Danksin overheard Hicheson's part of the telephone talk.

When the newspapers began to use the veiled police hints that Hicheson was under suspicion, and with had known of his bride's death, he began to worry and then to tell. The druggist's story of the dog that needed killing came to light, Hicheson had no dog. Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Danksin, Miss Hanscomb added their bits. Stories of Hicheson's conduct as a country pastor streamed in from Hyannis.

On October 19 Hicheson was arrested. He was in bed at the home of Moses Grant Edmunds, trustee of the Newton Theological Seminary, where Hicheson had been hiding, coming down to the city to see Miss Violet Edmunds. Hicheson got out of bed when the warrant was served. He asked Miss Edmunds not to worry, as his innocence would be proved quickly. In jail he was visited by Mr. Edmunds, who believed the charge was absurd and gave money for lawyers and for the settlement of Hicheson's small debts. Mr. Edmunds closed his home. His daughter departed and eventually came to New York to do mission work.

On November 2 Hicheson made a statement beginning "I am a strong and conscientious man, without any firmly convinced that God in His own good time will lift this burden from me," and ending with his resignation from the pastorate of the Immanuel Baptist Church. He assured his counsel and friends that he would be cleared. They believed him. It seemed incredible that a man of his intelligence could have bought poison from a man he knew and told stories that could so easily be disproved.

The trial was set for January 15. The lawyers, looking for witnesses who Hicheson could not find, found none. There was no evidence that Hicheson was insane, although certain relatives in Virginia had been. The lawyers were at their wits' end when Hicheson mutilated himself in his cell on December 20. Into that act everybody read the workings of a tortured conscience. In the course of his recovery he made no sign, but on January 3 he confessed in this statement to his counsel, John A. Lee, William A. Morse and Philip Dunbar:

GENTLEMEN: Deeply penitent for my

sin and earnestly desiring as far as in my power to make atonement, I hereby confess that I committed the crime of which I stand indicted. I am moved to this course by no inducement of self-interest or leniency.

Heinous as is my crime, God has not wholly abandoned me and my conscience and manhood, however depraved and blighted, will not admit of my still further wronging by a public trial where my pure young life I have destroyed.

I fear the lashings of remorse I have suffered and am suffering the tortures of the damned. In this I find a measure of comfort. In my mental anguish I recognize that there is still, by the mercy of the Master, some remnant of the divine spark of goodness still lingering within me. I could wish to live only because within some prison's walls I might in some small measure redeem my sinful past, help some other despairing souls and at last find favor with my God.

You are instructed to deliver this to the District Attorney or to the Judges of the court. Sincerely yours,

CLARENCE V. T. RICHESON.

On January 6, the day the confession was made public, Hicheson received his last letter from Miss Edmunds. On the same day Moses Edmunds sadly withdrew his support. Thomas V. Hicheson of Lynchburg, Va., brother of Clarence, was sentenced to death by Judge George A. Anderson on January 9 and returning to his cell he collapsed.

A family petition for commutation of the sentence to life imprisonment was denied by Gov. Foss, although the Governor abhors capital punishment. A commission of insanity experts searched the man's whole history and said he was responsible for his acts. Hicheson tried to bribe a guard to buy cyanide of potassium. In a few days preceding his end he was comparatively calm and expressed a wish that he might die quickly.

Hicheson was born at Rose Hill, Va., thirty years ago. His father has a tobacco farm near Lynchburg. From the high school at Amherst, Va., Hicheson went to Missouri to the farm of an uncle in Carrollton. In St. Louis he earned money for a college education. He worked as a clerk and then a street railway conductor. He was a leader in the street car strike of 1909 and made good an exhorter. He taught in a Sunday school and preached at a mission. He attended lectures at William Jewell College at Liberty, Mo., in 1902, and when the Rev. Philip Ashton Rollins, Alfred Adams, Wheat and Roswell S. Nichols, members of the firm of Rollins & Rollins, and Fulton J. Redman, who is connected with that firm.

The action depends on an alleged difference in the testimony given in the proceedings before the referee by James M. Gifford and by other witnesses, and has to do with a bill for \$15,000 rendered by the firm of Gifford, Hobbs & Beard, attorneys for the Northern Bank, before it was taken over by the State Department of Banks. An attorney may hold a lien upon papers in his possession to enforce the payment of a bill for services. Mr. Gifford in his testimony before the referee is said to have testified that his firm had surrendered the papers of the Northern Bank, while others among the lawyers named testified that the Gifford firm still held the papers. Anson Boat, a partner of Mr. Gifford, explained yesterday that the transactions related; that he had given orders to a clerk before his departure for the surrender of the papers, but that these orders had not been followed and the firm still held the papers. Mr. Gifford, returning, went on the witness stand and told of the surrender of the papers, presuming that his orders had been complied with.

Superintendent of Banks Cheney took over the affairs of the Northern Bank on December 27, 1910. When Gifford, Hobbs & Beard presented the bill for services Mr. Nichols of Rollins & Rollins, counsel for the Banking Department, ascertained that the Gifford firm had sufficient funds of the bank in their possession to cover the amount of the bill. The claim was submitted to the board of directors of the bank, which approved it, and it then was approved by Deputy Attorney-General Sackett. Supt. Cheney then presented an ex parte petition to Justice Newburger in Part II of the Supreme Court praying that he might be permitted to pay as a preferred claim the amount named.

The petition related that the superintendent was informed by the department attorneys that Gifford, Hobbs & Beard had a lien upon all papers, records and documents in their possession relating to the bank's affairs and to the affairs of its predecessors, the Mayday Avenue Realty Company and the Kingston Securities Company, as well as a lien upon bank moneys in their possession as attorneys for the bank. The petition continues that the superintendent is informed that Gifford, Hobbs & Beard were handling upward of 200 accounts for the recovery of money for the bank.

The superintendent asked that he be allowed to pay the amount named on condition that all the papers of the bank in possession of the law firm be turned over to the department and that the Gifford firm consent to the substitution of an attorney designated by the superintendent. The petition was accompanied by the consents of members of the executive committee and directors of the Northern Bank.

Justice Newburger declined to sign the order on the ground, according to Robin, that it appeared that some of the services for which payment was demanded were performed for predecessors of the Northern Bank. He also said: "What rights the directors at this time have in the distribution of the funds of the bank I am at a loss to understand. The effect of the granting of such an order would be to give a preference to the attorneys over the depositors and other creditors of the bank. . . . I have searched in vain through the banking law of this State for any authority for the granting of this order."

Action was then brought against the State Superintendent of Banks to collect the amount. The proceedings were conducted before ex-Judge Ernest Hall as referee, and resulted in a judgment of the full amount of the claim with costs, but not as a preferred claim. Robin says in his petition that \$9,000 has been collected on the claim.

In commenting upon the matter yesterday Mr. Beard characterized it as "too ridiculous to chide." He said that it seemed strange that this "confessed crook" should have a large room and a stenographer assigned to him in the District Attorney's office and that he should be left practically at liberty "to blackguard honest men." He added that he intended no criticism of the District Attorney or his methods.

Mr. Nichols of the Rollins firm, explained the case in some detail and gave it as his opinion that the discrepancy in the statements made by the lawyers was due to a mistake on the part of Mr. Gifford owing to his absence in Europe and consequent unfamiliarity with that part of the bill had been gone over thoroughly in the proceedings before Referee Hall and that it had been decided by the referee and the court. Mr. Robin might have appeared at the time, Mr. Nichols said, but did not do so. Mr. Nichols has prepared a lengthy statement of the case for presentation to the court as his answer to Robin's petition.

ROBIN NOW ATTACKS WELL KNOWN LAW FIRMS

From the Tombs He Assails Two Firms of Attorneys.

NORTHERN BANK FEES They Are the Point at Issue in the Action Which He Brings.

Joseph G. Robin, who is in the Tombs awaiting sentence on a plea of guilty to a charge of grand larceny, has presented a petition to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court asking for an investigation of the conduct of certain lawyers who, individually or through their firms, had to do with the affairs of the Northern Bank of which Robin was the head.

The action is in the nature of a disbarment proceeding, but is brought by an individual instead of being brought through the Bar Association. The matter complained of already has been passed upon by a referee, who decided that the claim on which Robin bases his charges was rightfully due and the referee's report was approved by a Justice of the Supreme Court.

Robin might have appealed from the approval of the report but did not do so. A note of issue was filed with the Appellate Division yesterday and the matter has been set down for May 31. The same evidence has been presented to Attorney-General Carmody by William Duncan Cameron, attorney for the depositors' committee of the Northern Bank.

The attorneys named in the petition are Orion H. Cheney, the State Superintendent of Banks; James M. Gifford, John D. Fearhake and Anson Boat, members of the firm of Gifford, Hobbs and Beard, and Charles A. Voestch, connected with the firm of Philip Ashton Rollins, Alfred Adams, Wheat and Roswell S. Nichols, members of the firm of Rollins & Rollins, and Fulton J. Redman, who is connected with that firm.

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